Self-field and in-field performance enhancement for coated conductors

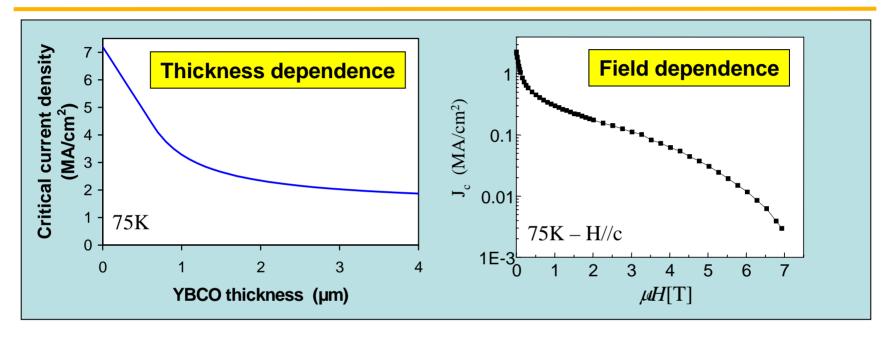
Steve Foltyn, Leonardo Civale Haiyan Wang, Boris Maiorov, Quanxi Jia, Paul Arendt, Judith Driscoll*, Jason Mantei**, Yuan Li, Yuan Lin, Marty Maley

Superconductivity Technology Center
Los Alamos National Laboratory
and
*University of Cambridge
**University of Wisconsin-Madison

Project cost: \$900k



Although many problems have been solved,* there are still two important areas that require improvement

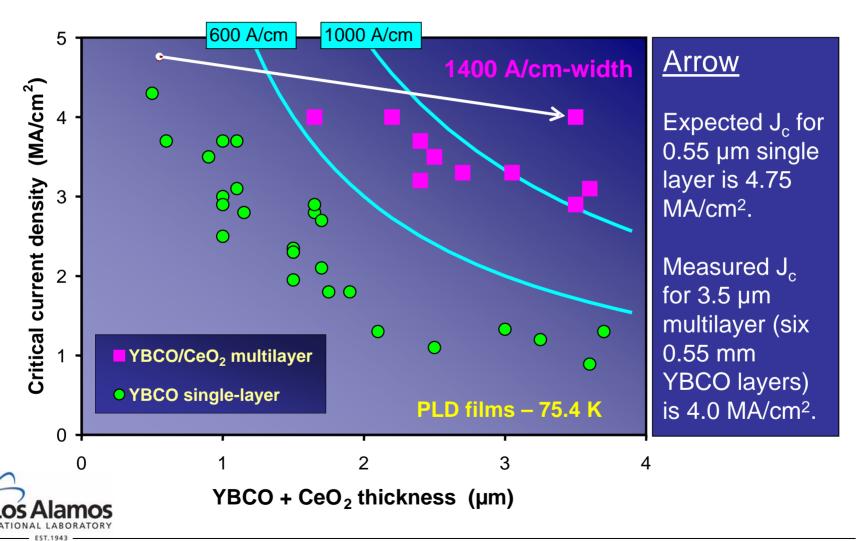


*Examples of solved problems:

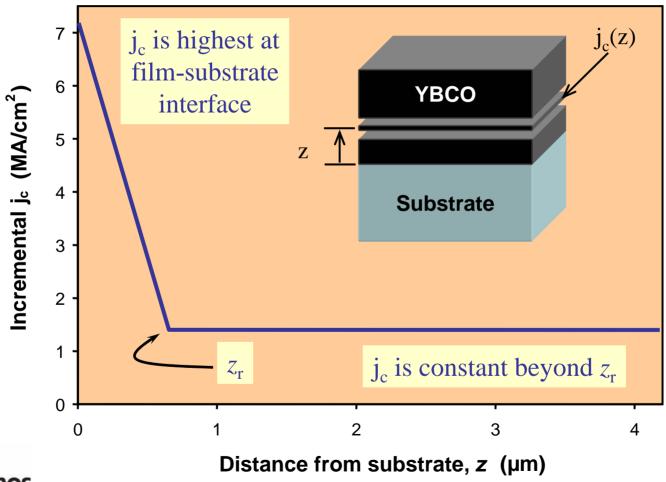
- The self field J_c of very thin films, 7 MA/cm², is ~ 10% of depairing current density further improvement is unlikely.
- ► Performance of IBAD MgO-based coated conductors is not limited by grain boundaries J_c is the same as for single-crystal substrates.



Last year we showed that multilayer coated conductors have I_c values above 1000 A/cm-width

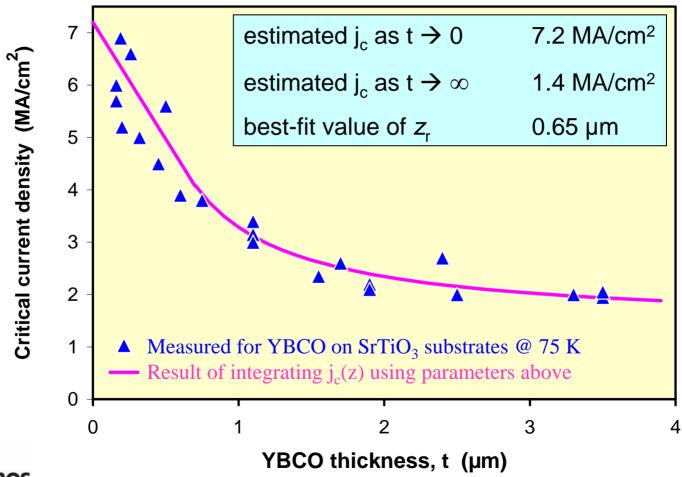


To investigate how multilayers work we developed a model for the incremental j_c within a film ...



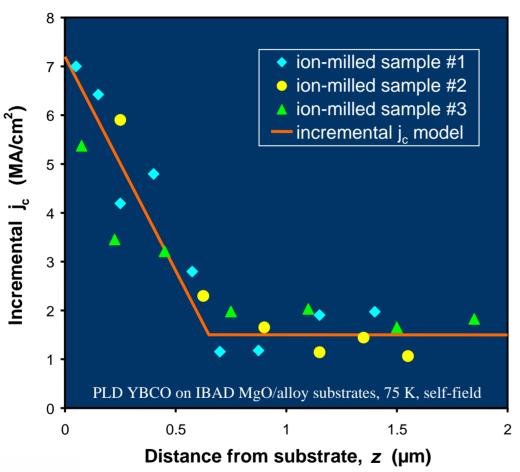


... that exactly reproduces measured J_c thickness dependence with one adjustable parameter





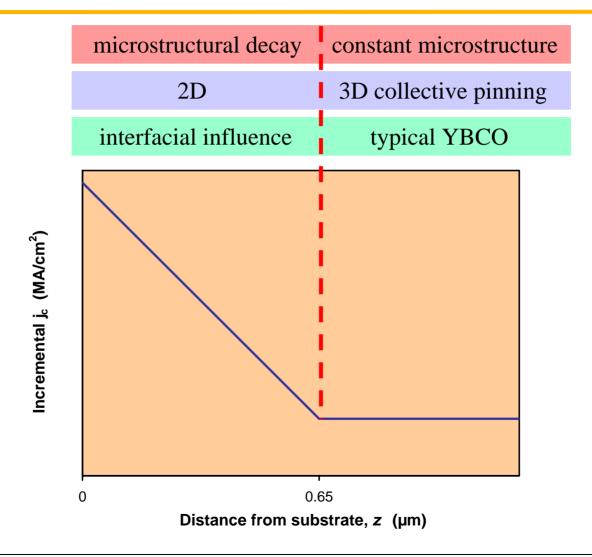
And this year we validated the model by comparing it with $j_c(z)$ obtained from ion-milling data



- Measure sample I_c
- Remove thin layer by ion milling
- Measure I_c of remainder
- Calculate ΔI_c
- Measure layer thickness
- Calculate J_c of layer
- Repeat until t = 0



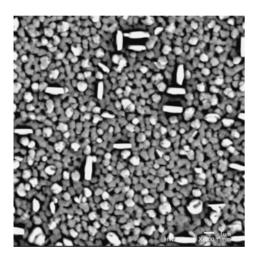
The next step was to investigate three possible explanations for the shape of the incremental j_c function



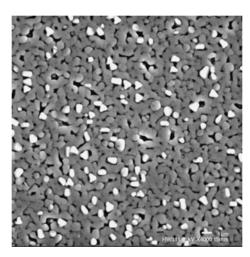


The first hypothesis we tested is that microstructural decay is responsible for decrease of J_c with thickness

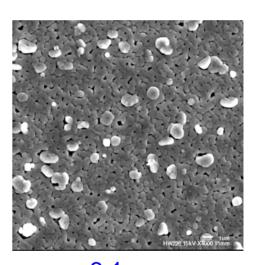
SEM images show that multilayers using either SmBCO or CeO₂ interlayers improve morphology (substrates: IBAD MgO on metal)



3.7 µm YBCO single-layer



3.2 µm
YBCO/SmBCO
6-layer multilayer

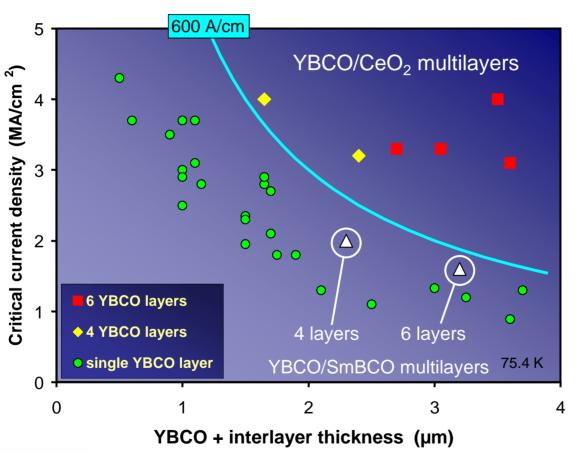


3.1 µm YBCO/CeO₂ 6-layer multilayer



image size: 25 μm x 25 μm

The difference between CeO_2 and SmBCO suggests that morphological improvement does not strongly affect $J_c(t)$



Test

Replace CeO₂ interlayers with SmBCO, keeping all other process conditions the same.

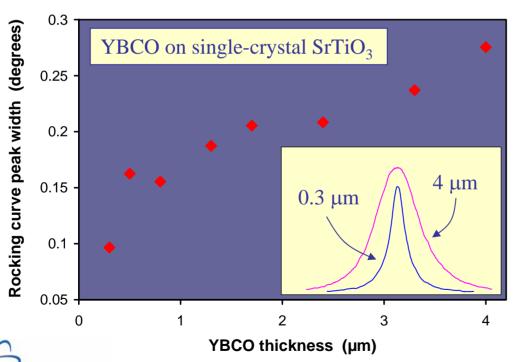
Result

YBCO/SmBCO multilayers have J_c values more like YBCO single-layers



Results showing definitive correlation between microstructure and J_c are thus far elusive

- → Microstructure does deteriorate with increasing film thickness...
- → ...but it tends to do so linearly, unlike J_c
- → If linear trend continues, microstructural decay will eventually dominate J_c



Similar results for variation of:

★ 45-degree-rotated

YBCO grains

- * RBS channeling
- **★** film density
- * average screw

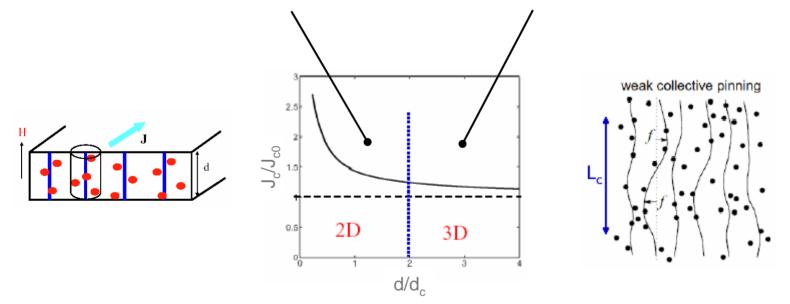
dislocation density



A second potential explanation for $J_c(t)$ is a 2D-to-3D crossover in the collective pinning regime

Short vortices in thinner films are rigid and cannot easily accommodate to random pinning sites. J_c is proportional to (thickness)^{-1/2}

Longer vortices in thicker films can more easily flex to intersect random pinning sites. J_c is constant.





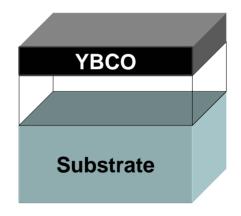
A. Gurevich, *et al.*, presented at the Superconductivity for Electric Power Systems Annual Review, July 27-29, 2004, Washington DC

To test this hypothesis we need a way to isolate and measure slabs of YBCO from a thick film...

...because in the 2D-3D model, J_c is determined by the YBCO thickness and will be constant regardless of the slab's location in the film

Since we cannot remove a slab and measure it, we need to deposit films on "invisible" spacer layers having the following properties:

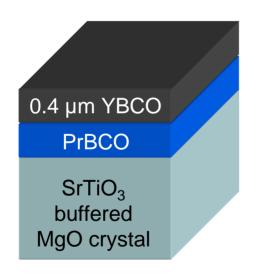
- not superconducting
- → a perfect lattice match to YBCO

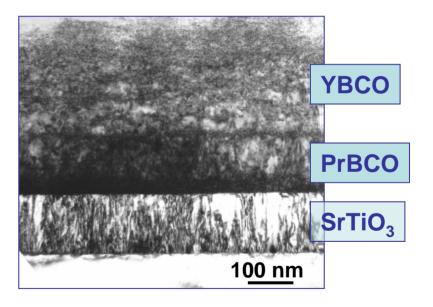




PrBCO closely matches the invisibility criteria, so we made a series of bilayers with varying PrBCO thickness

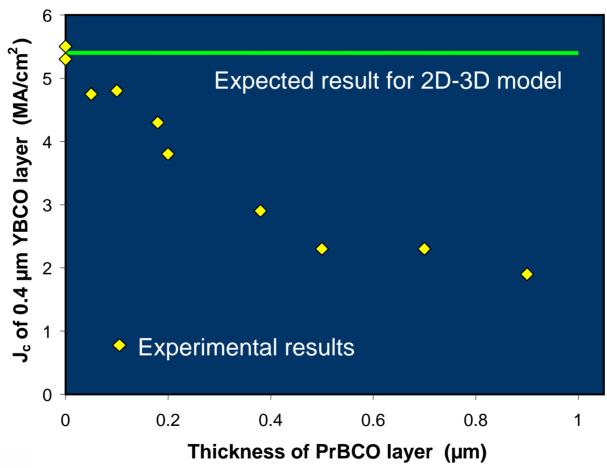
- → Nonsuperconducting PrBCO isolates vortices from the defect-rich interface.
- → The PrBCO/YBCO interface is nearly homoepitaxial and relatively free of defects.





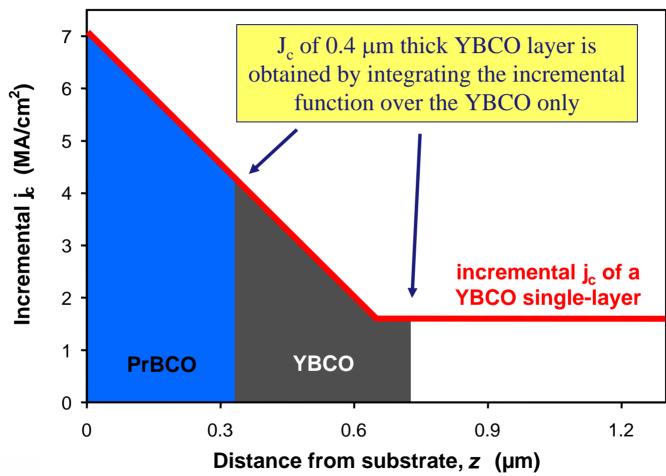


Result: Constant J_cs predicted by the 2D-3D crossover model are not observed in the PrBCO/YBCO bilayers



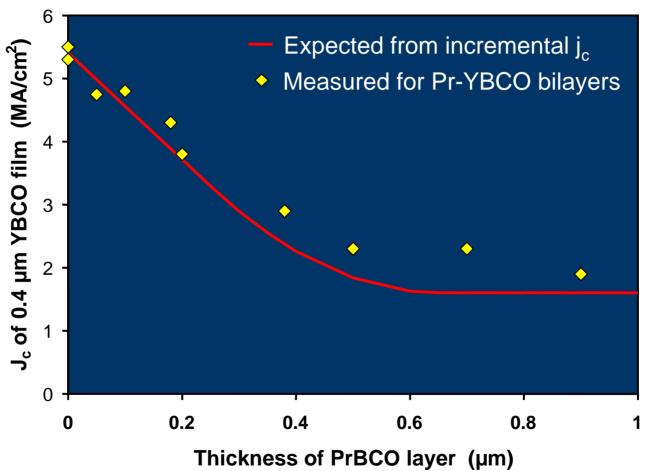


But if we calculate J_c of the bilayer films based on the incremental j_c function ...





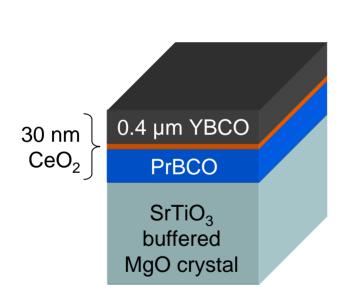
...experimental results match the calculation, suggesting that $J_c(t)$ is interface-related

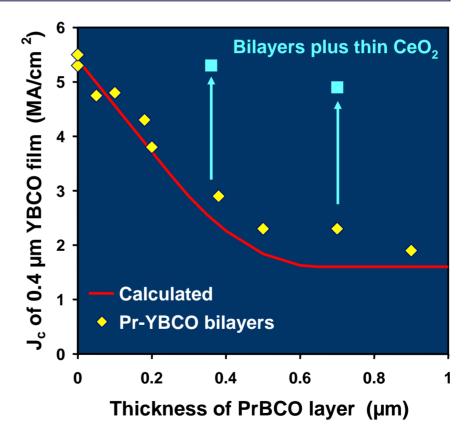




Importance of the interface is further supported by adding a CeO₂ layer between PrBCO and YBCO

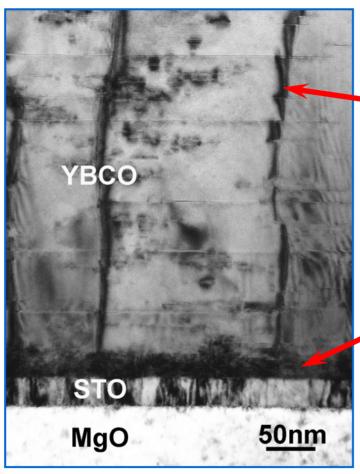
The CeO₂ layer restores J_c to the level of a 0.4 µm YBCO single layer film







What is the source of strong pinning near the interface?

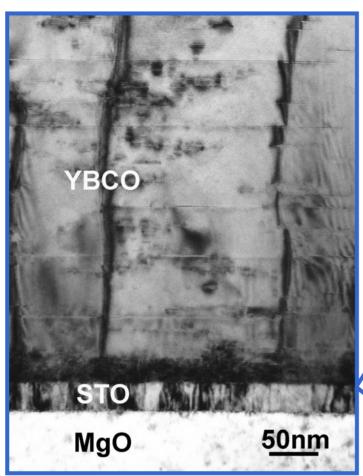


Threading dislocations between growth columns are the kind of defect that can give rise to the constant j_c observed beyond 0.65 μ m.

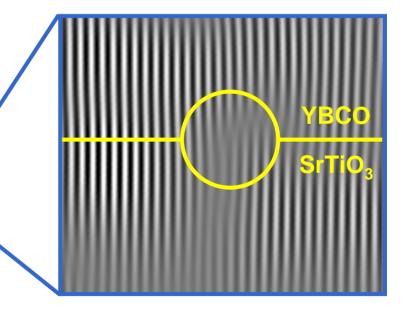
A dark band near the YBCObuffer interface indicates a higher density of defects that could produce strong pinning at the film-substrate interface.



The dark band is due to misfit dislocations at the YBCO-buffer interface

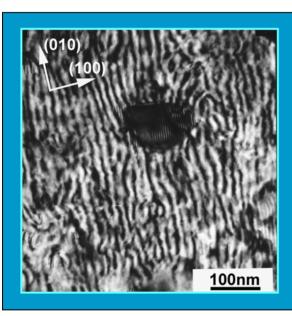


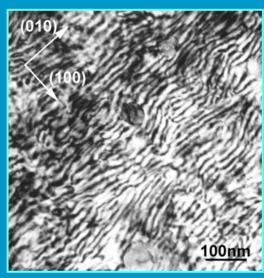
Fast Fourier Filtered Image of a high-resolution cross section shows that the dark band is due to misfit dislocations at the interface.



The dislocations are parallel to the YBCO b-axis because of larger misfit with the a-axis

TEM plan views of a ~ 20 nm thick YBCO film on a SrTiO₃ single-crystal substrate Misfit dislocations have also been observed at the YBCO-CeO₂ interface





Misfit between SrTiO₃ lattice and:

YBCO a-axis – 2.4 %

YBCO b-axis - 0.7 %

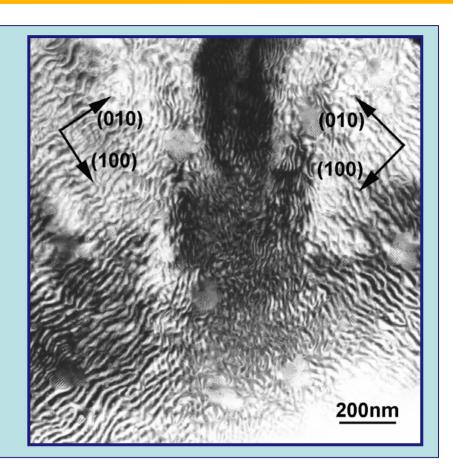
Spacing of ~ 17 nm is consistent with a-axis misfit



Since the a-axis has two possible orientations, misfit dislocations form a net that seems ideal for strong pinning

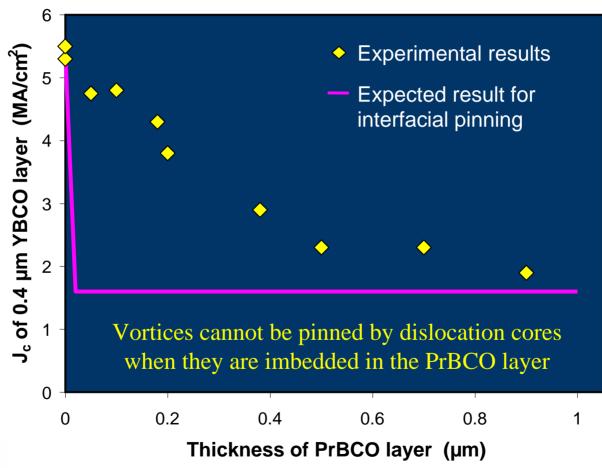
TEM plan view showing two adjacent growth islands in a 20 nm thick YBCO film on SrTiO₃.

The YBCO a- and baxes for the two islands are rotated 90 degrees with respect to one another and the misfit dislocations in each island are orthogonal.





But strong pinning by the dislocation cores is inconsistent with the PrBCO bilayer experiment...





...because enhanced j_c extends 0.65 μm into the film – far beyond the thickness of the heavily defected layer

And this value has remained constant throughout the history of our work on the thickness dependence of J_c

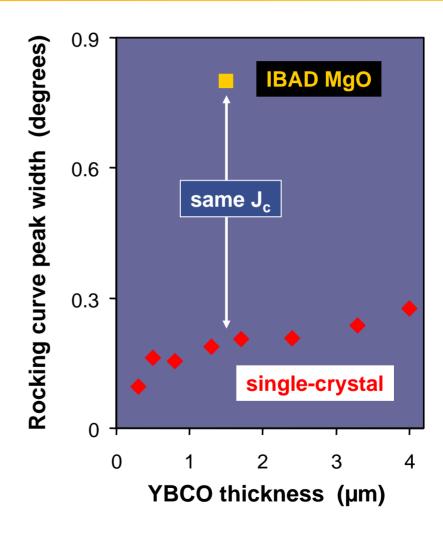
SUBSTRATE TYPE	Single-crystal YSZ + CeO ₂	IBAD YSZ + CeO ₂	Single-crystal SrTiO ₃ and IBAD MgO + SrTiO ₃	Single-crystal MgO + SrTiO ₃
YEAR	1993	1999	2004	2005
j _c at interface	5.5 MA/cm ²	3.8	7.2	7.1
bulk j _c	0.75 MA/cm ²	0.5	1.4	1.6
range* – z _r	0.65 μm	0.65	0.65	0.65



* \pm ~0.1 μm

Evidence is not yet sufficient to determine whether microstructural decay causes J_c thickness dependence

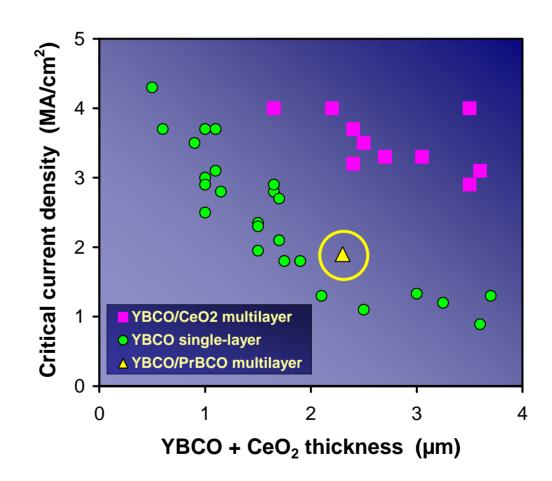
- \rightarrow SmBCO and CeO₂ interlayers both improve film morphology and texture, but multilayers have very different J_c.
- Apparent correlations between J_c and microstructure can be misleading. \rightarrow





Intrinsic effects such as a 2D-3D crossover are not responsible for J_c thickness dependence

- → In bilayer experiments, J_c of 0.4 µm YBCO layer should be independent of PrBCO thickness it is not.
- → PrBCO-based multilayers should have J_c comparable to CeO_2 , but they do not. →



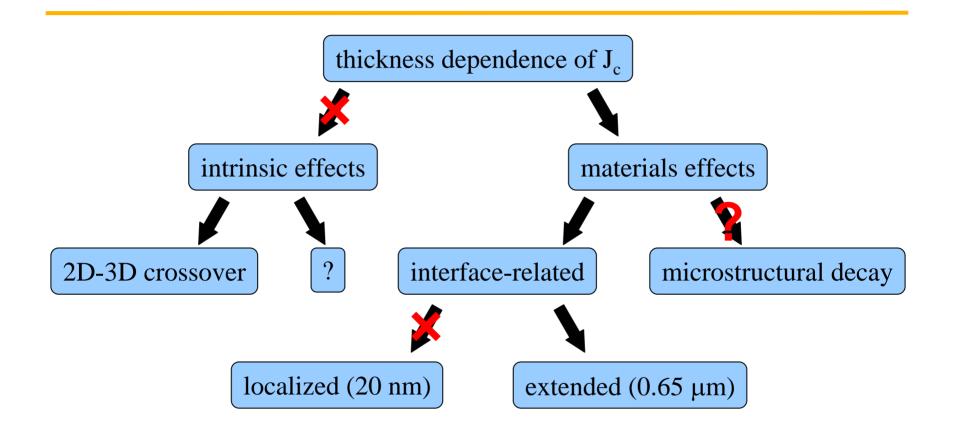


There is much evidence that J_c thickness dependence is due to enhanced pinning near the interface

- \rightarrow The highest incremental j_c occurs nearest the interface
- → Heteroepitaxial interfaces (e.g. CeO₂/YBCO or Y₂O₃/YBCO), which contain misfit dislocations, result in high-Jc multilayers.
- → "Homoepitaxial" interfaces (e.g. SmBCO/YBCO or PrBCO/YBCO), which contain relatively fewer defects, do not increase multilayer J_c.
- \rightarrow Moving YBCO farther from the interface (with PrBCO) decreases J_c in a systematic way.



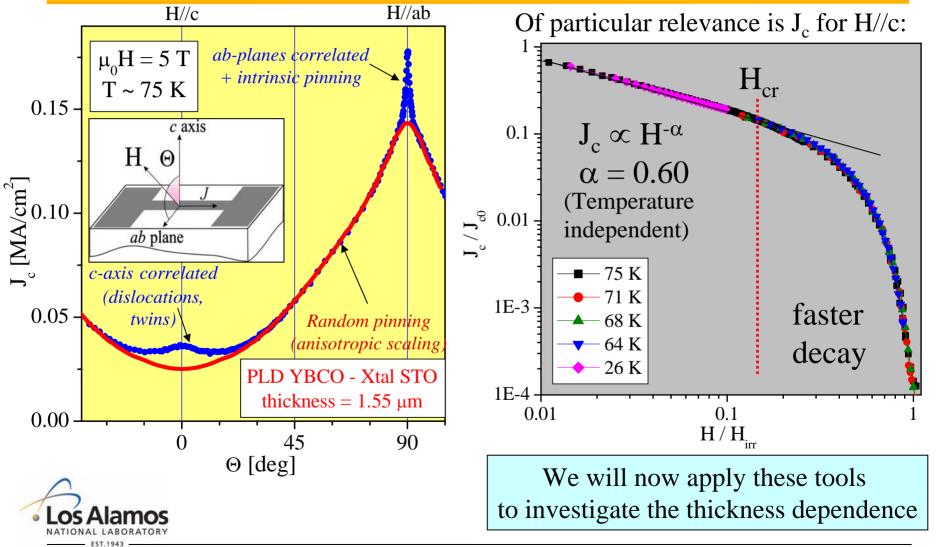
So, in summary:

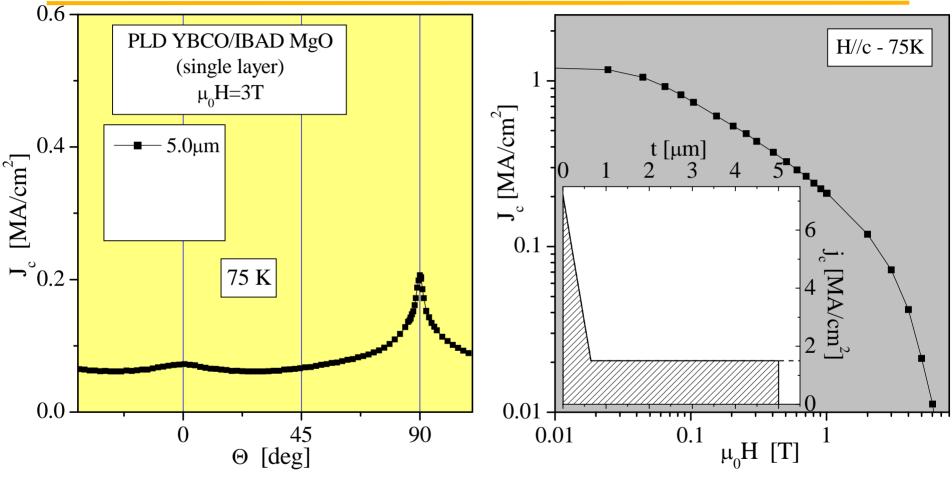




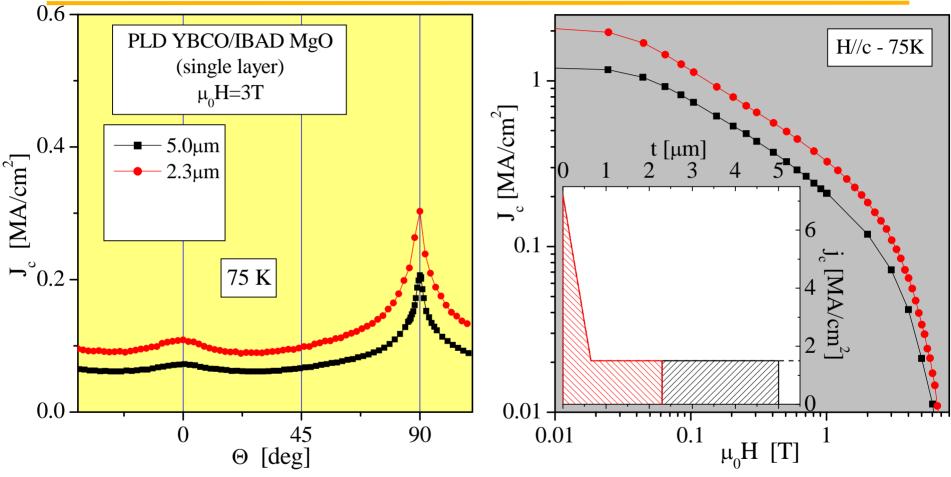
What is the source of strong pinning near the interface? We will obtain additional information from the in-field J_c

We use the field, angular and temperature dependences of J_c to identify pinning mechanisms and regimes

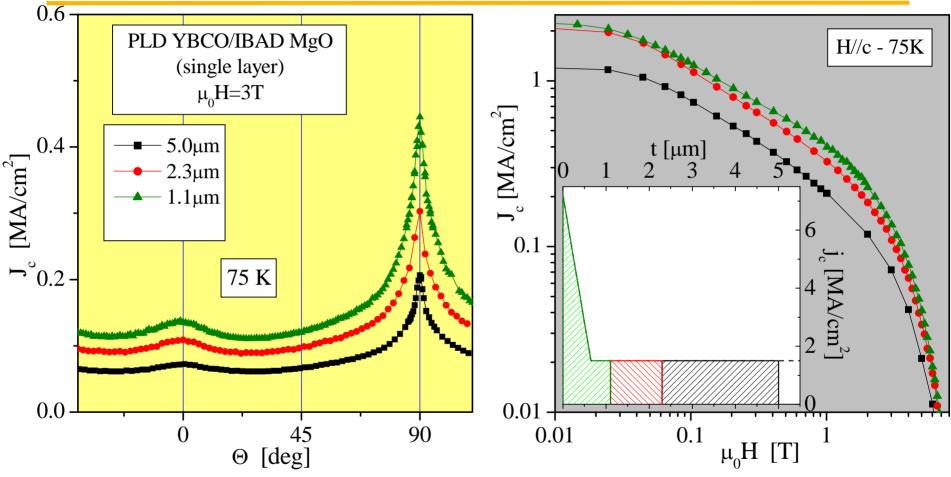




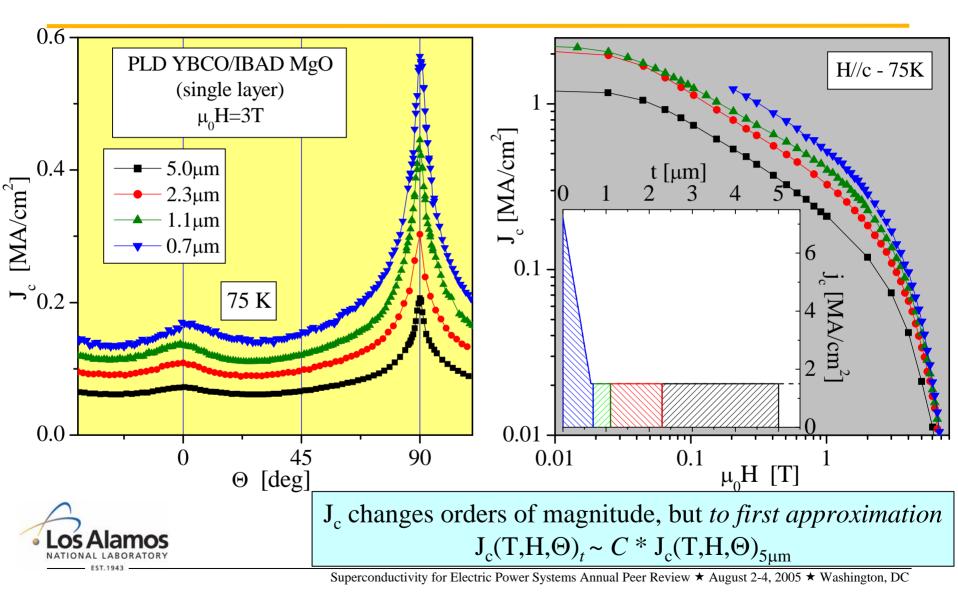




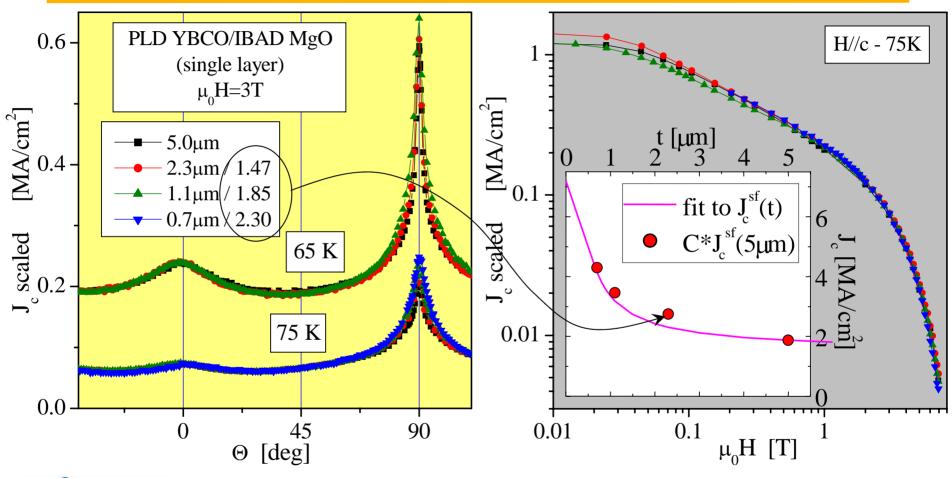








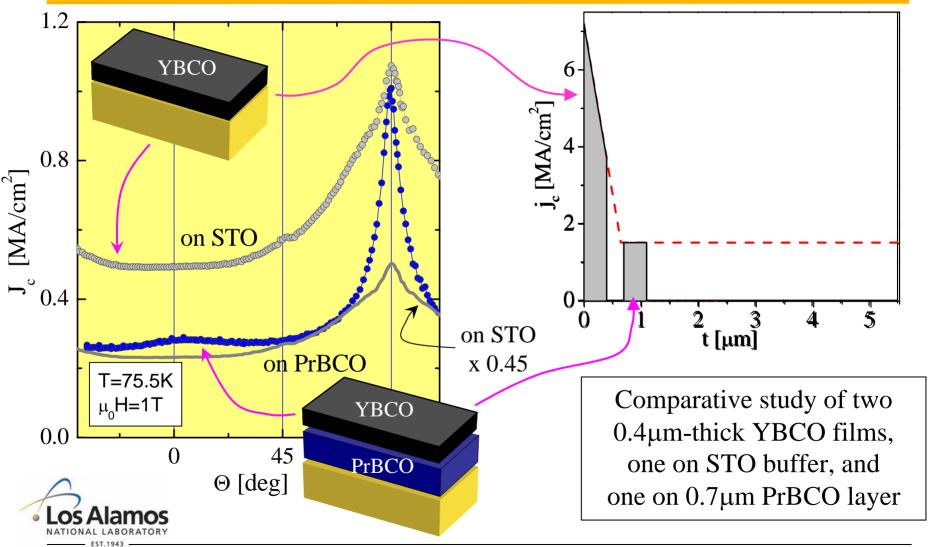
Curves for all thicknesses can be overlapped by just dividing by a factor, which is the same one obtained for self field



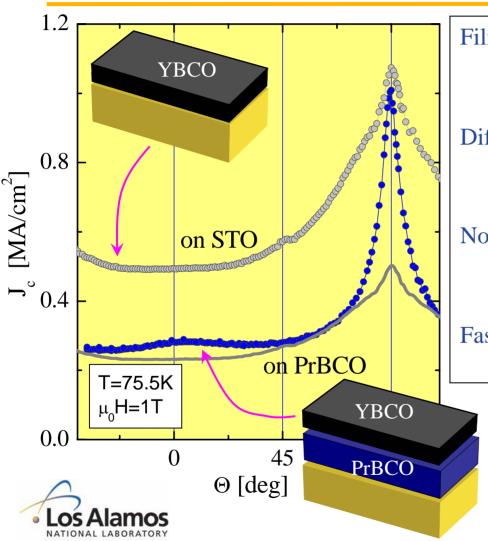


The thickness dependence is not related to vortex physics

There are more and/or stronger defects near the interface. What else can we learn about them??



There are more and/or stronger defects near the interface. What else can we learn about them??



Films of same thickness have different J_c:

• Film on STO has more and/or stronger pinning centers.

Different dependence on Θ :

• Additional defects close to STO buffer are different from "bulk" defects.

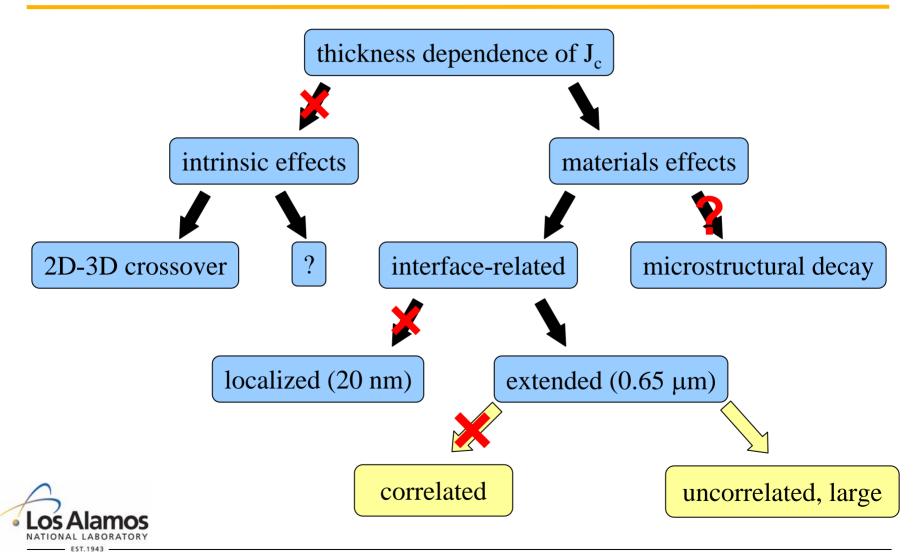
No large peaks for H//c & H//ab in film on STO:

• Suggests that the additional defects are uncorrelated.

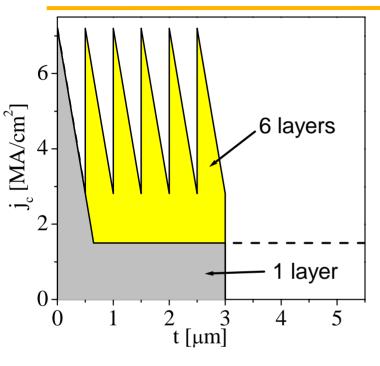
Faster decay with H (not shown):

• Additional defects are large and scarce.

Our in-field studies impose additional constraints on the possible origin of the stronger pinning in thinner films



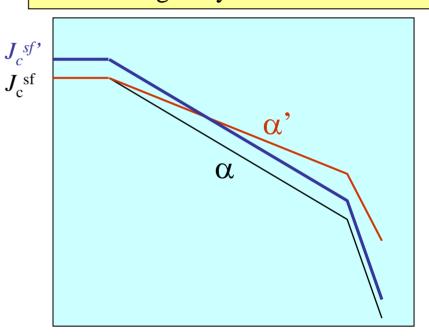
Multilayers retain high self-field $J_{\rm c}$ of thin films by resetting the interface-induced pinning. What happens in field?



- Higher J_c^{sf} (e.g. multilayers) (without increasing α)
- Lower α (without decreasing J_c^{sf})

• Los Alamos

The real goal is to improve J_c at technologically relevant H and T



Context:

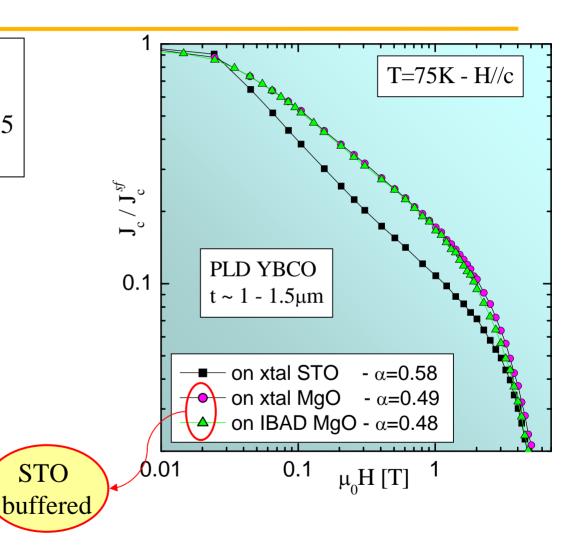
what is the field dependence of single layer PLD films?

α values are robust for given film deposition parameters and can be used as a characterization tool

 α for PLD YBCO: on xtal STO ~ 0.6 on buffer STO $\sim 0.45 - 0.55$ (consistent for many samples)

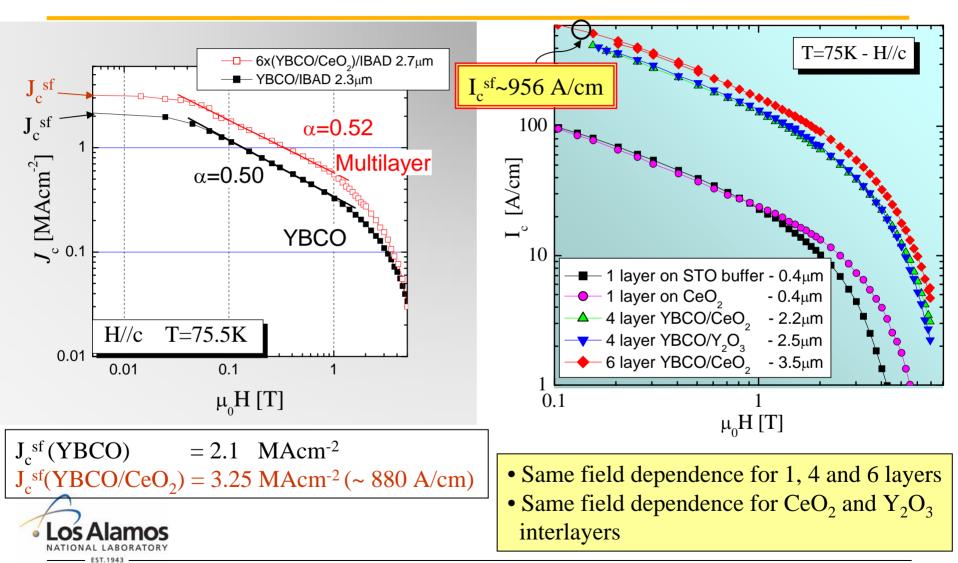
Last year we showed that:

- Lower α on STO buffer is due to pinning by dislocations associated with STO outgrowths.
- α as low as ~ 0.4 can be obtained by reducing STO deposition temperature, but at the price of reducing J_c^{sf}

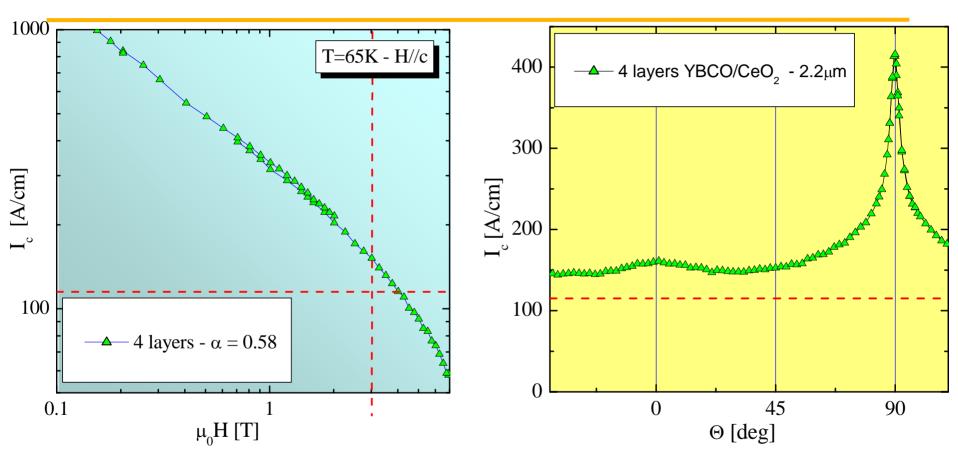




YBCO/CeO $_2$ multilayers: *in-field* J_c increases due to higher J_c^{sf} with no deterioration in α



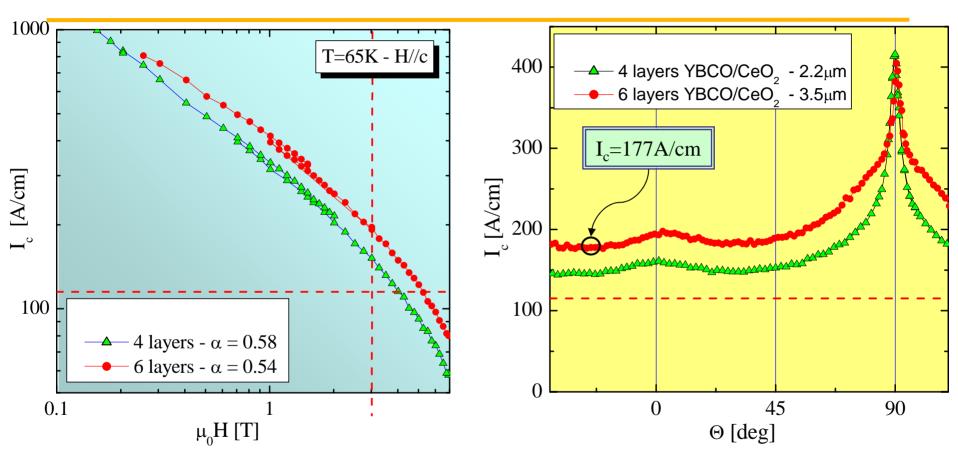
The 2.2 μ m thick multilayer comfortably exceeds the target of 115 A/cm at 65K and 3T, worst orientation (DoD Title 3 goals)*





*as calculated by AMSC, Xiaoping Li presentation, Wire Workshop January 2005

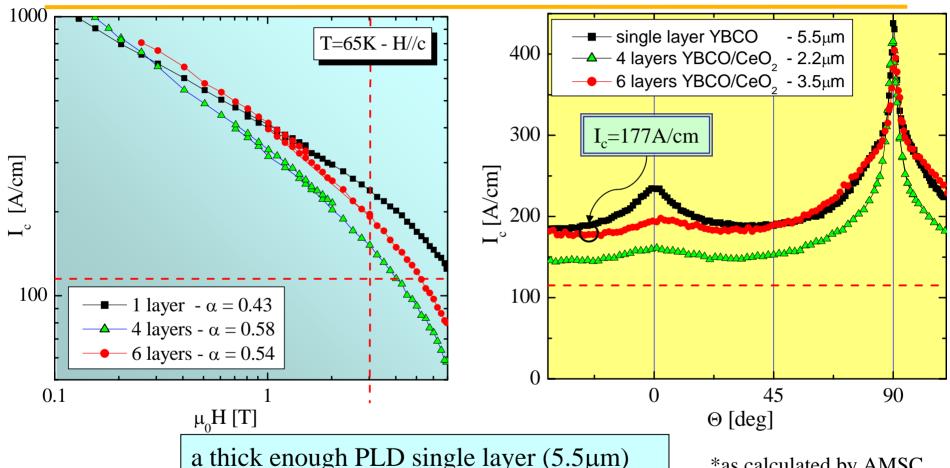
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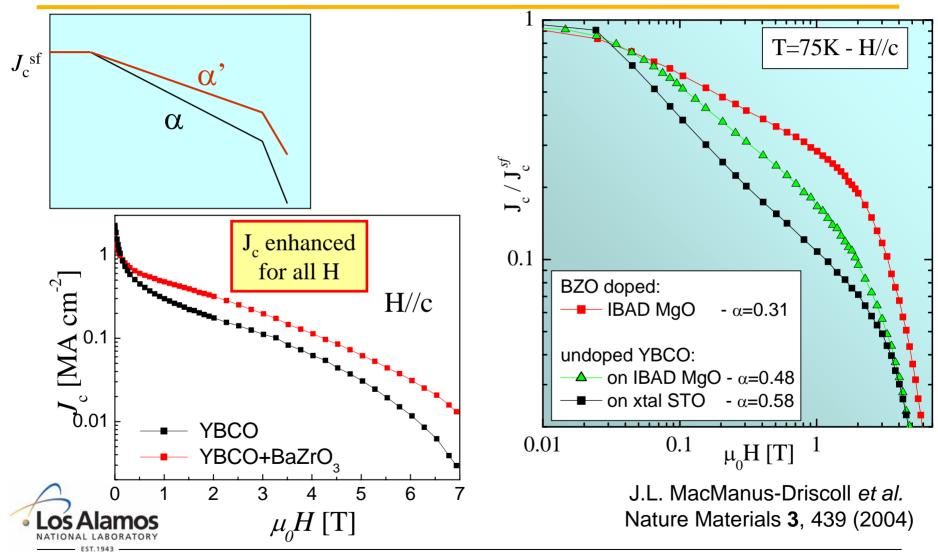
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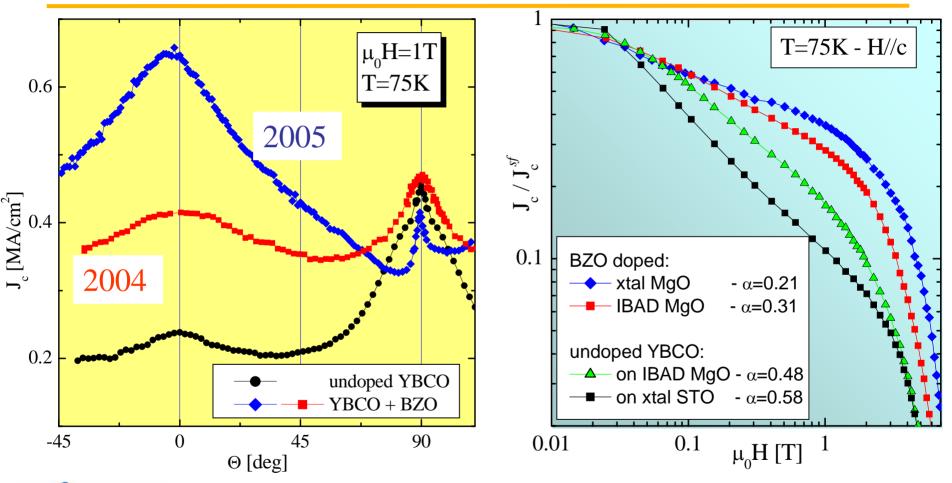
a thick enough PLD single layer (5.5 μ m) with low enough α (0.43, STO outgrowths) also exceeds the requirement

*as calculated by AMSC, Xiaoping Li presentation, Wire Workshop January 2005

Last year we showed that doping with BaZrO $_3$ nanoparticles results in smaller α and no significant decrease in J_c^{sf}

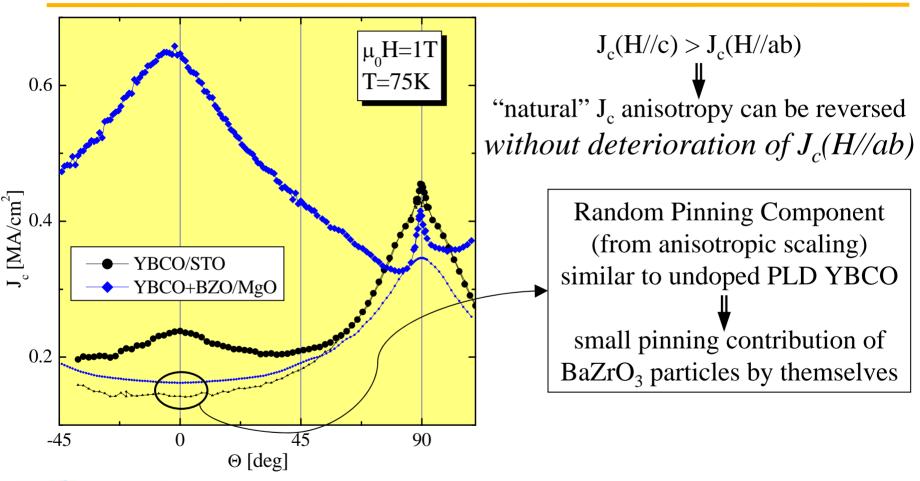


We have now obtained record low field decay with α ~ 0.20 This is directly related to a very large c-axis peak



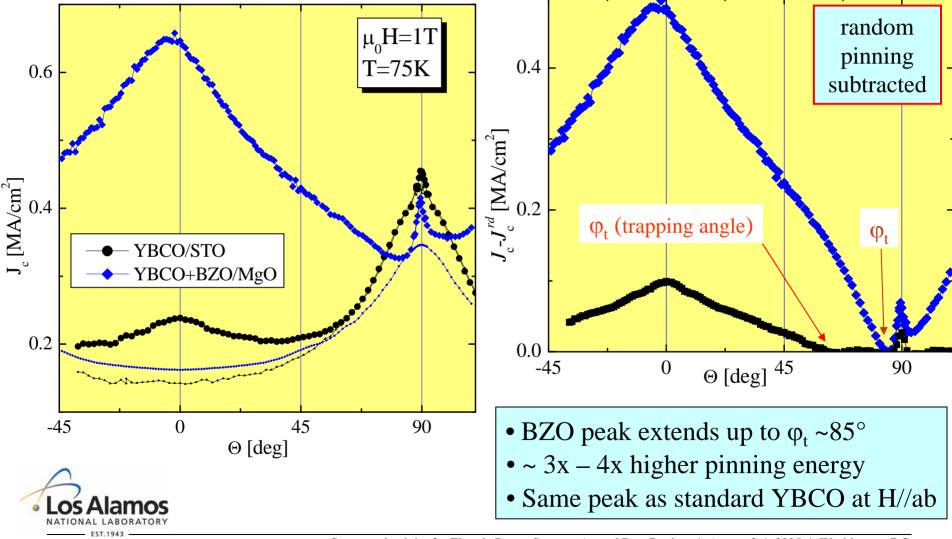


J_c is dominated by additional c-axis correlated defects (dislocations): anisotropy can be reversed!

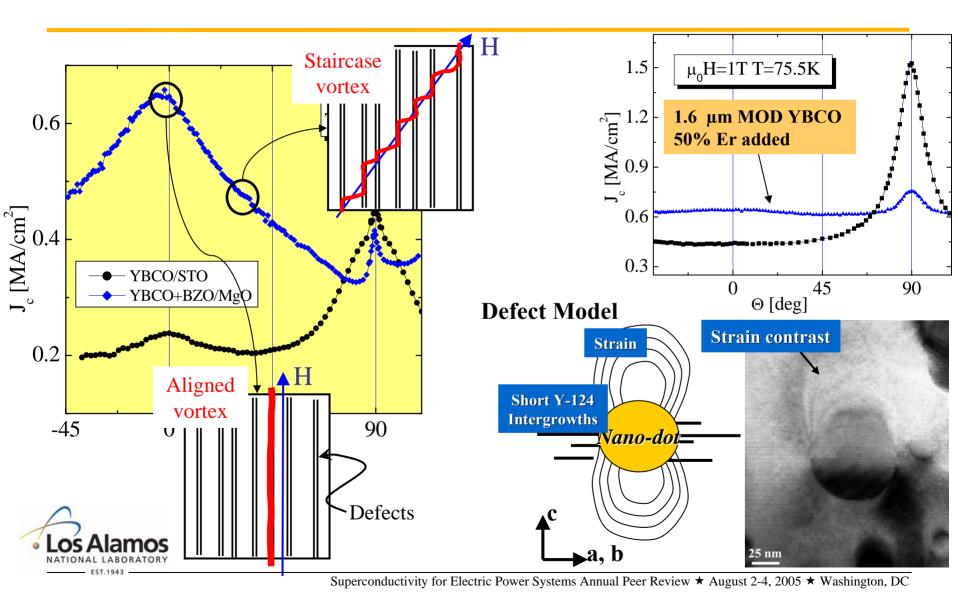




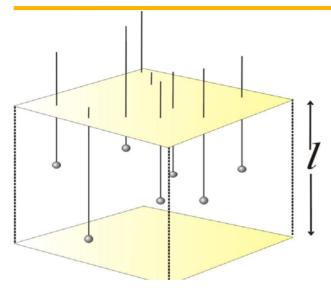
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BZO nanoparticles in PLD: aligned defects//c-axis Nanodots in Er-added MOD: strain field (splayed-like)

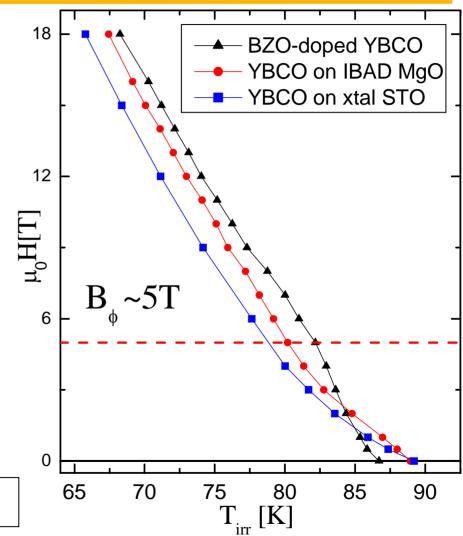


The density of c-axis correlated defects (dislocations) can be estimated from TEM images



Mean dislocation distance $d \sim 40$ nm Mean dislocation length $l \sim 120$ nm

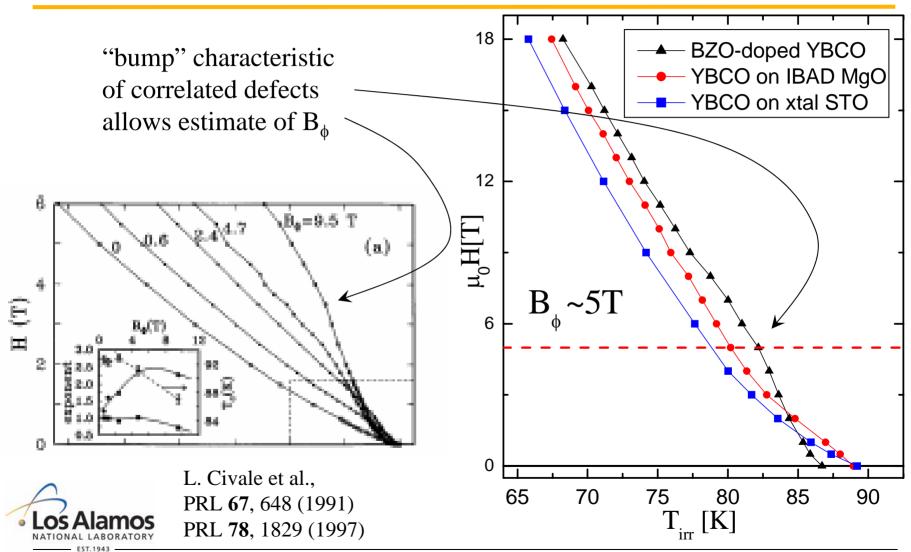
•The number of dislocations that cross an ab-plane per unit area is the "matching field" B_₀



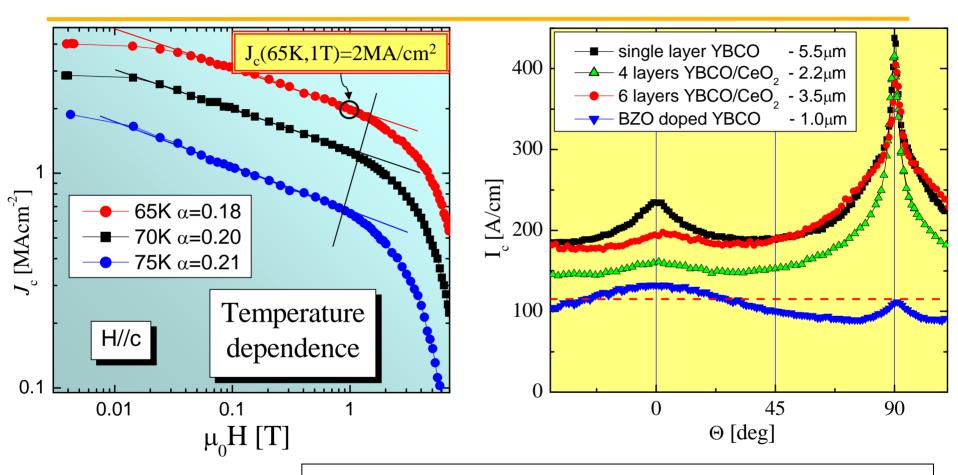


$$B_{\phi} = \phi_0 (1/d)^3 l \sim 4 T$$

As in the case of columnar defects made by heavy-ion irradiation, these dislocations increase the irreversibility line



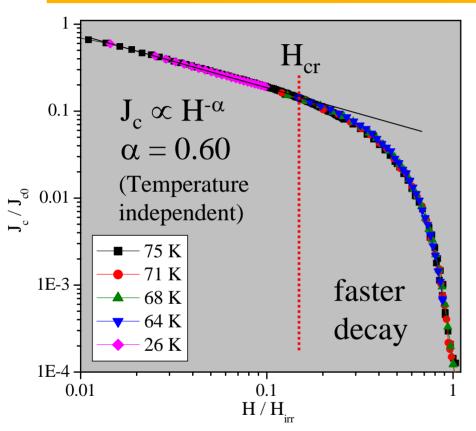
The record low α of the BZO-doped PLD YBCO is maintained at lower temperature





Target of 115 A/cm at 65K and 3T (worst orientation) almost achieved by a 1 µm film !!!

Transport measurements at 26K (in liquid Ne) give same α values as those obtained at 65K-75K



However, several open questions remain:

- What happens in the technologically relevant 30K-50K range?
- What is the temperature dependence of H_{cr} ?

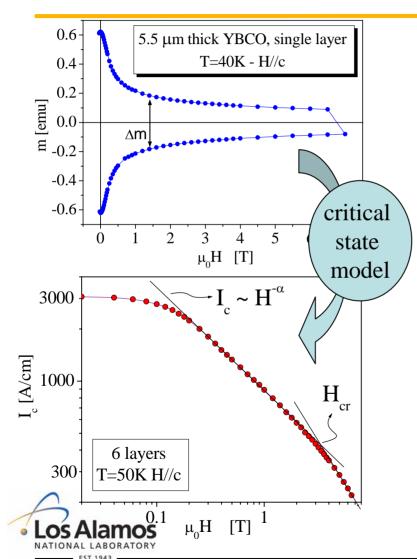
From a practical perspective:

Transport measurements in liquid Ne are slow and expensive, with risk of sample damage due to contacts heating



We decided to incorporate a complementary technique: determination of J_c by magnetization

Magnetization measurements of J_c allows us to explore the whole temperature range from 4K to T_c



Additional advantages:

- Fast (no patterning required)
- No risk of sample damage

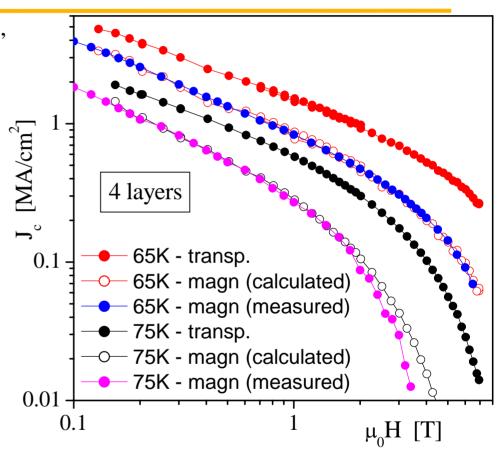
How well do transport and magnetization values of J_c compare?

Complication:

- Magnetization has an equivalent "voltage criterion" of $\sim 10^{-10}$ 10^{-11} V/cm, several orders of magnitude lower than transport (10^{-6} V/cm)
- So, magnetic J_c is lower than transport J_c . The difference is significant for low N in the $V \sim I^N$ curves

Magnetization and transport measurements of J_c show excellent agreement if voltage criterion effect is corrected

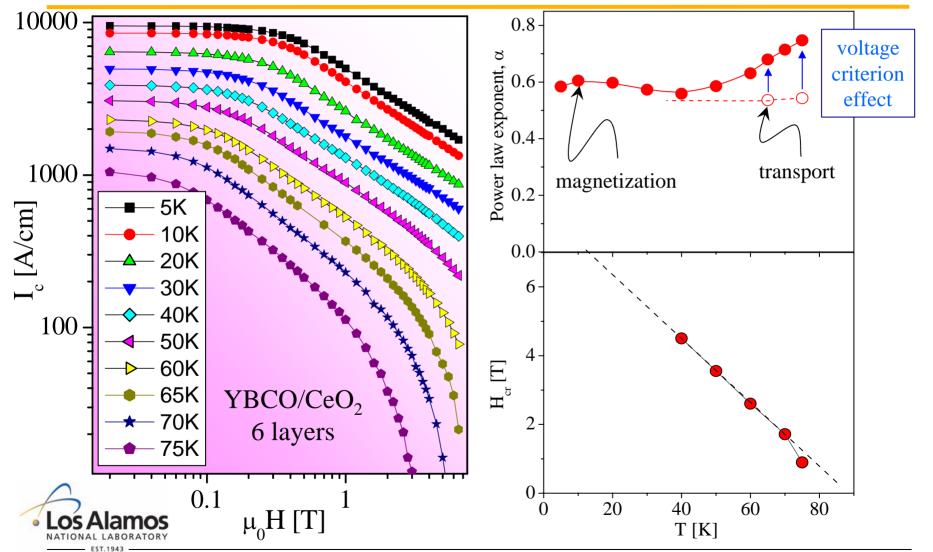
- Transport J_c corrected by "voltage criterion" coincides with magnetization results.
- For large N (low H) the correction is minor.
- The difference increases as N decreases (field increases).
- Magnetization α is higher than transport α , the difference is small and systematic.
- J_c and a magnetization values can be safely compared among samples.



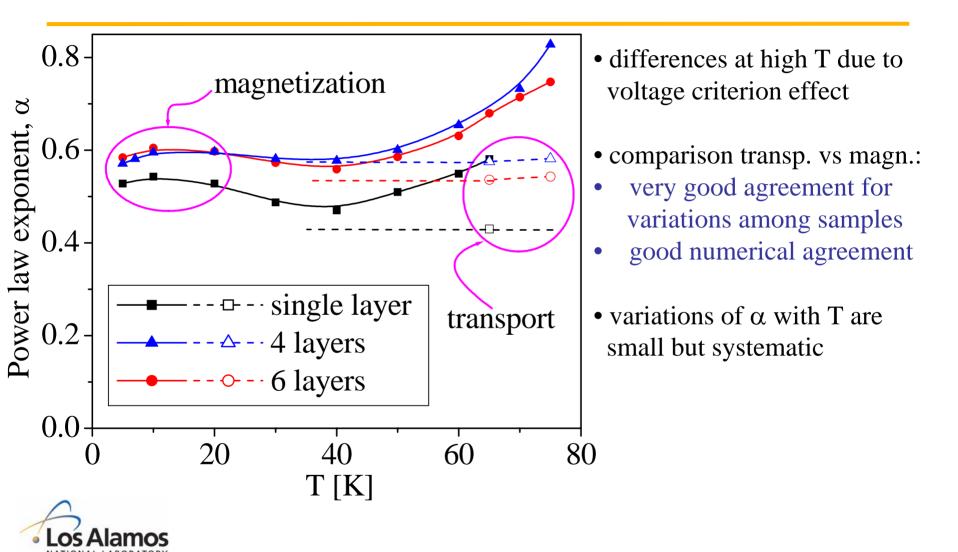


We will always show real (not corrected) magnetization results. Magnetization J_c is equal to or lower than transport J_c

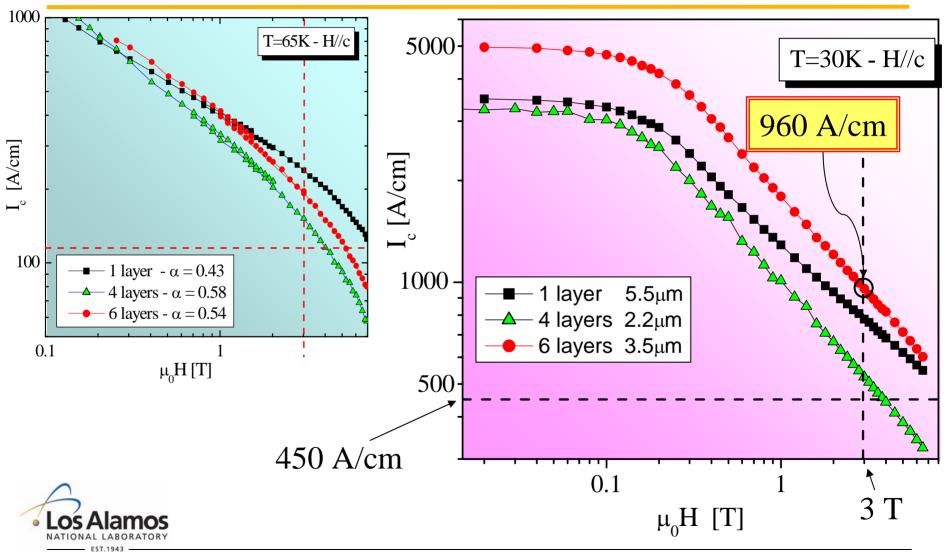
We can obtain maps of J_c , α and H_{cr} over large T-H regions



α in undoped YBCO (single- and multilayer) is *almost* temperature independent



The multilayers (and the thick single layer) also exceed the DoD Title 3 target of 450 A/cm at 30K and 3T



Scoring criterion -- Results

- 1. Validated incremental j_c model by ion milling.
- 2. Developed tools such as PrBCO/YBCO bilayers for further analysis of thickness dependence.
- 3. Measured the thickness dependence as a function of T, H and Θ .
- 4. Significantly narrowed possible explanations for thickness dependence of J_c.
- 5. Found a "smoking gun" for interfacial effects in misfit dislocations.
- 6. Determined that the defects responsible for additional pinning in thin films are uncorrelated and scarce.
- 7. Demonstrated that multilayers retain high I_c performance in field.
- 8. Surpassed all DoD Title 3 I_c milestones
- 9. Found record low field decay of J_c in BaZrO₃-doped films.
- 10. Introduced new tools (such as magnetization and high-field irreversibility line) for further exploration of vortex pinning.



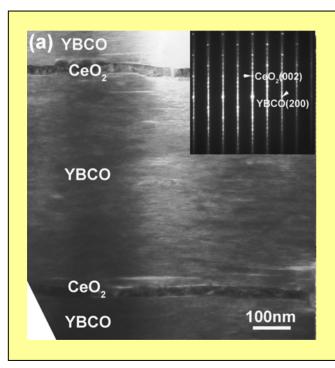
Scoring criterion -- FY2005 Performance

Assist industrial partners in implementing multilayer designs appropriate to their deposition technologies.

- → Multilayers were regularly discussed with SuperPower during site visits and conference calls.
- → SuperPower has decided to utilize multilayers in their MOCVD/IBAD MgO process, and has successfully demonstrated multipass YBCO a necessary step.
- → Samples were exchanged for process optimization and advanced characterization at Los Alamos.
- \rightarrow We have successfully demonstrated the use of Y_2O_3 interlayers, which will facilitate incorporation of multilayer technology into the MOCVD process.



Continue to refine multilayers to exploit very high J_c s for thinner YBCO. Goal: Reproducible 1000 A/cm-width in 2.5 μ m.



With our typical layer thickness of $\sim 0.6 \mu m$:

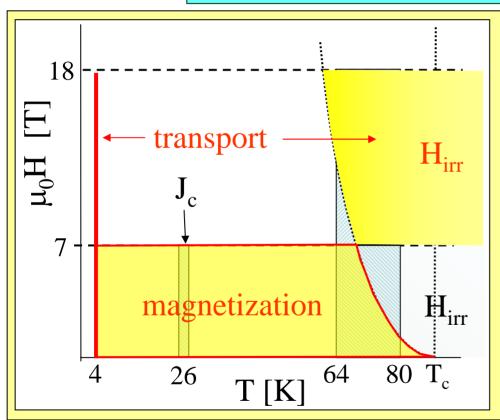
- → 880 A/cm-width, 2.2 μm, 4 YBCO layers
- → 890 A/cm-width, 2.3 μm, 4 YBCO layers
- 900 A/cm-width, 2.5 μm, 4 YBCO layers*
 *(first test of Y₂O₃ interlayer)

Promising result with thinner YBCO:

→ 385 A/cm-width, 0.7 μm, 2 YBCO layers (5.5 MA/cm²)



Improve our liquid Ne (26K) measurement capabilities. *Goal: 5 fold throughput increase.*

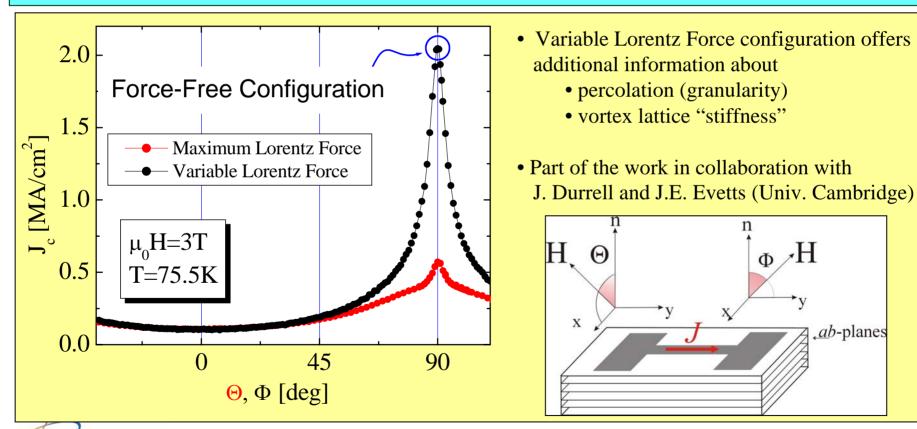


We modified and expanded this goal:

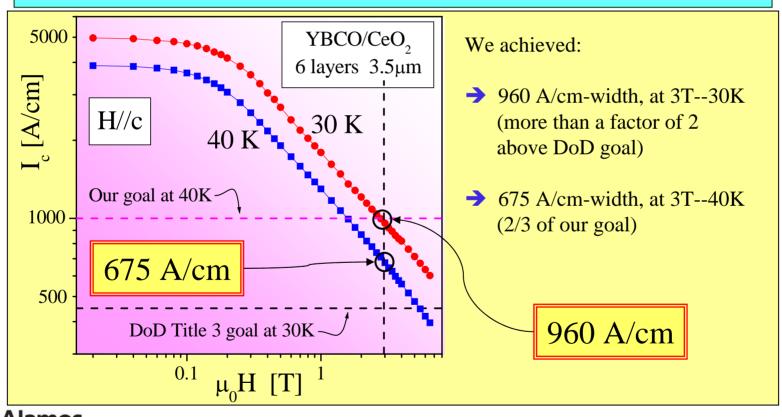
- J_c from magnetization 4K to T_c up to 7T (throughput 3-5 samples/week)
- J_c from transport, 4K, up to 18T
- H_{irr} from transport, up to 18T



Extend angular dependent measurements to non-maximum Lorentz force configurations. *Goal: understanding of pinning and current distribution in realistic situations for applications.*



Continue to study pinning enhancement by nanoparticles, RE substitutions (variance), and YBCO/CeO₂ multilayers (coordinated with S. Foltyn et al.). *Goal: 1000 A/cm at 40K, 3T.*



Scoring criterion -- Research integration

- → We have worked closely with SuperPower in many areas (addressed in our CRADA talk yesterday):
 - ✓ Laying the groundwork for transfer of multilayers to their MOCVD-based production process.
 - ✓ Measurement and analysis of temperature, field and orientation dependence of J_c for pinning improvement in MOCVD CC.
 - ✓ Winding and characterization of coils using IBAD MgO-based tapes.
- As part of the Wire Development Group, we identified planar defects along the ab planes as the main source of pinning in MOD films from American Superconductor, and explored the pinning effects of RE additions and oxygen treatments (addressed by T. Holesinger in WDG talk Tuesday).
- We continued our extensive collaboration with the Univ. of Cambridge, UK (J.L. Driscoll, J.E. Evetts, J. Durrell), in the exploration of pinning enhancement routes, vortex dynamics in variable Lorentz force configurations, and characterization of thick films grown by Hybrid Liquid Phase Epitaxy (HLPE)



Scoring criterion -- Research integration

- → We continued our collaboration with the Air Force Research Lab. (T. Haugan, P. Barnes) on the vortex pinning of their 211-based multilayers.
- → We have begun a new collaboration with MIT Lincoln Laboratory to aid in a study to see if multilayers can improve the properties of HTS-based microwave filters.
- → We began a collaboration with Ron Feenstra (Oak Ridge National Laboratory) to explore angular and field dependent pinning mechanisms in ex-situ films produced by BaF₂. (addressed in WDG talk Tuesday).
- → We began a collaboration with the group of D. Larbalestier at Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison (summer student-magnetization studies)
- → We began a collaboration with Argonne National Laboratory to employ focused ion beam milling to compliment our ion milling experiments.



Scoring criterion -- FY 2006 Plans

- The Continue research into the cause of elevated j_c near the interface. Goal: Understand the 0.65 μm range of influence.
- Survey alternate interlayer or buffer layer materials.

 Goal: Determine which properties are significant in producing high interfacial j_c .
- Push the practical limit to thick-film I_c that can be achieved by depositing a greater number of thinner YBCO layers.

 Goal: 1000 A/cm-width in a 2 μm film.
- The Combine multilayers with an in-field pinning enhancement method. Goal: self-field $I_c = 1000$ A/cm-width and $\alpha < 0.4$.



Scoring criterion -- FY 2006 Plans

→ Continue to work with American Superconductor in the understanding and enhancement of vortex pinning in ex-situ films.

Goal: To be coordinated with AMSC.

→ Work closely with SuperPower to produce high-current multilayers on IBAD MgO using MOCVD.

Goal: Significant improvement over single-layer $I_c s$.

